

Issue Category:

Environmental

Heading or Title:

Planning for Waste Services

Details of Issue:

The Local Government sector is a key stakeholder in NSW planning decisions affecting waste management and resource recovery. Local Government in the Sydney region disposes or recycles over one and a half million tonnes of household waste each year, and are the largest contractor of new infrastructure for waste management. Councils and regional waste groups in the Sydney region have prepared Waste strategies on the expectation that adequate facilities for disposal and recovery have been included in district planning. With Councils now offering increased recycling opportunities for recovery of household organics waste and recovery of resources direct from garbage, their role and service needs in ensuring human and environmental health outcomes and the meeting of NSW waste strategy targets should be foremost in the proposed District Plans which will ensure local government waste needs across the Sydney area are prioritised and optimal.

Motion or Proposed Solution:

That Local Government NSW actively works with the Greater Sydney Commission and the Department of Planning to ensure organics, recycling and waste processing infrastructure, building design and transport access issues are considered and covered in all 6 Sydney District Plans. District Plans must ensure planning for adequate capacity of waste and resource recovery infrastructure.

Issue Category:

Environmental

Heading or Title:

Waste Services – High Density Living

Details of Issue:

The increasing density of urban areas means basic issues of traffic and transport of waste have become priority considerations in ensuring residential amenity. The fundamentals of planning at local government level for delivering household waste services have changed dramatically in the past 10 years. In the Sydney area, over 44% of housing stock is now provided by multi-unit apartments, townhouses and villa developments. This level is set to increase to over 50% in the near future. The means to deliver essential waste and recycling services to these new buildings by local government will require best practice design for waste management. Best waste design must be fully realised in the planning controls for these new developments, which will need ongoing services for decades to come. The expectation of the community is that local government will continue its primary service role in waste management even as these developments alter the nature and level of waste and recycling services available. Local government is the key stakeholder for delivery of these services to their communities and NSW planning authorities must ensure that full consultation and a cooperative approach on waste management planning controls with Councils is provided.

Motion or Proposed Solution:

That to ensure maintenance and improvement of residential amenity, the growth in higher density housing and traffic issues are properly considered and local government is consulted when planning for resource recovery, recycling and waste infrastructure in increased density developments.

Issue Category:

Social Policy

Heading or Title:

Pensioner Rebates – Increased Government support

Details of Issue:

Since 1988 pensioners in NSW have received a mandatory subsidy of up to \$250 on residential rates.

Currently Councils receive reimbursement of 55% of this subsidy from the State Government. The Local Government Act (s581) only requires 50% of the rebate to be reimbursed from the State Government with the additional 5% currently being paid by the NSW Government. This is as a result of the Federal Government withdrawing its 5% contribution in 2014-15.

The NSW Government then gave an election promise to maintain the 55% funding, but Penrith City Council believes that the 55% reimbursement to Councils should be continued indefinitely and calls on the State Government to confirm its continuation by amending the Local Government Act to mandate this funding.

The remaining 45% is borne by ratepayers – currently more than \$1.2 million in Penrith City.

Council also calls on the State Government to fully fund an additional increase above the current subsidy of \$250, and to commence annual indexation to ensure that State and Federal funded support to our pensioner communities is enhanced and maintained at a State level.

Motion or Proposed Solution:

That Local Government NSW call on the NSW State Government to:

1. Confirm that they will continue to reimburse Councils 55% of pensioner rebates and amend the Local Government Act to preserve this important level of support to pensioners.
2. Commit to fully funding an increase to the Pensioner Rebate and subsequent indexation.

Issue Category:

Social Policy

Heading or Title:

Exemptions for Community housing providers

Details of Issue:

Recent court decisions declared community housing providers to be exempt from rates. Penrith City Council has since exempted 70 properties and abandoned approximately \$90,778.

We presently have a further 40 properties owned by community housing providers with rates totalling \$78,946 which may be subject to exemptions.

There are presently 1,936 properties owned by the NSW Land & Housing Corporation or Aboriginal Housing with rates totalling \$2,118,708 which are presently payable by the Crown. These properties have the potential to be transferred to other housing providers and may become exempt.

Motion or Proposed Solution:

That Local Government NSW call on the NSW State Government to:

1. Amend the Local Government Act to remove the exemption that is currently being used by Community Housing providers.

Issue Category:

Governance/Civic Leadership

Heading or Title:

Advertising Local Government Elections

Details of Issue:

Council staff and councillors over a number of elections have received significant representations from the community about the lack of notification and advertising that is conducted in respect to local government elections. Council undertakes a significant advertising campaign locally, however, clearly one of the most effective forms of advertising is through a well targeted television campaign. It would seem appropriate that rather than individual council's being asked to fund a campaign for an event that applies generally to the entire industry, that a coordinated approach is taken.

Additionally, often there is a misconception that revenue derived from fines applied to local residents who do not vote is returned to each Council. It would be appropriate for this revenue generated to be returned to a pool of funds that is managed by the State Government, LG NSW or other body to deliver future advertising campaigns.

Motion or Proposed Solution:

That Local Government NSW call on the NSW State Government to:

1. Investigate the feasibility of a contribution being collected from all Councils in order to fund a television campaign to advertise Local Government elections.
2. Reinvest fine revenue collected from residents for failing to vote into a pool of funds that is allocated for future advertising campaigns.